

## **Rural Environment Planning Association (REPA) Inc**

### **Chairman's Annual Report for Preceding Year – 31 March 2009**

This is my first report as Chairman of REPA to the 36<sup>th</sup> AGM of our organisation and it has been another year when our activities have been dominated by roads and developments.

This year REPA's membership has remained healthy with over 300 members probably largely thanks to the threats of unwanted roads and inappropriate developments in our area. Over the year, we have produced 4 newsletters circulated by mail and/or email to all members. Our association held its information tent at the Brookfield Show to highlight local development concerns and allow visitors to see the changes occurring in our district through our collection of historical aerial photographs. Our committee members, especially the Hackers, participate in Government, Environmental and Legal Forums to keep abreast the ongoing changes in legislation and planning. Additionally committee members nominate as local representatives for community consultative committees for projects that might impact our area and environment. The REPA Management Committee has met regularly over the year, approximately every two months and prepares submissions for local regional development projects and plans.

Some comments on specific local roads and development issues:

#### **Goodna Bypass**

At our last AGM we celebrated the then recent announcement that the Goodna Bypass had been scrapped by the Rudd Government and the upgrade of the Ipswich Motorway is now in full swing. However as far as we are aware, none of the properties acquired by the State Government for the Bypass in Moggill have been sold to private owners. This means that we will need to remain vigilant to ensure that this decision is not reversed in the future.

#### **Western Brisbane Transport Network Investigation**

The activities of this investigation have been closely tracked by our WBBAG – Western Brisbane Bypass Action Group and regularly reported to REPA by David McCullough, our representative on the Community Liaison Group. By May last year, the 2 Brisbane Bypass options which would have severely impacted our part of Brisbane had been dropped, apparently because of lack of evidence for need. We continue to monitor plans for the Moggill Pocket sub-arterial, the Samford Valley sub-arterial and more recently the Kenmore Bypass study – all are included in the WBTNI.

#### **Kenmore Bypass**

As with most local development proposals, REPA is a keen participant in community consultation and lodges submissions. The Kenmore Bypass road corridor has been preserved since the 1970s and for those commuters from facing the twice daily crawl through the Kenmore/Chapel Hill stretch of Moggill Rd, a bypass to the Centenary Highway might be an attractive option. In addition, we would expect it to reduce the traffic congestion around the primary schools in Kenmore (OLR and KSS), as well as allowing for a dedicated bus lane on Moggill Rd and possibly discourage rat running in local streets.

Understandably those living along the Bypass road corridor have found the prospect very distressing and mounted a campaign to "Save our Kenmore". The Bypass Project team

received almost 1000 submissions to the proposed bypass options. One of the main concerns raised is the separation of Gem Rd by the bypass road as well as a number of environmental concerns. We expect to have another opportunity to respond once the Environmental Approvals Report is lodged on the Main Roads Website. Currently no funds have been budgeted for the construction of this road.

### **Moggill Road upgrade – Misty morn to Pullenvale Rd**

For those of us who had to travel through this section of Moggill Rd during the 18 months of construction, the completion of the road in December 2008 was very welcome. Traffic jams extending back to Grandview Rd or Mt Crosby Rd junctions on Moggill Rd were common on most weekday mornings. I would also like to note that the police assisting at the Pullenvale Rd junction did make a difference especially when they remembered to use their watches to time the access! Thanks to Bruce Flegg for his efforts in getting this road work completed and having the 3 sets of traffic lights synchronised. There haven't been any delays through that section of Moggill Rd this year.

### **Gap Creek Rd Upgrade**

Council announced a \$5M allocation in June budget 2008 to complete an upgrade of this road. Members of REPA, the Moggill Creek Catchment Group, Australian Koala Foundation and The Hut Environment and Community Association have been actively involved in the community consultations for this proposed upgrade. We are pleased that our concerns regarding traffic speeds and fauna protection are at last being considered important. Under consideration are measures to keep traffic speeds down to 50km/hr, provision of fauna crossings, road safety improvements for steep bends and crests, improving intersections (Kookaburra St) and minimising the construction footprint and impact on vegetation. We await the next detailed progress report.

### **Upgrade of Rafting Ground Rd Culvert near Wilunga St**

REPA has been involved with many aspect of this proposed upgrade since discussion with council started in July 2008. It involves raising and realigning the road on the Wilunga St approach to the culvert and making the culvert crossing wider with a footpath verge on both sides and bicycle path across the creek. The work is planned for 2009/10 year and will involved total closure of the road for vehicles during the works. Cycle and pedestrian access will be maintained during construction. Local BCC and Southern Cross buses will need to be rerouted and Brookfield state school students are apparently being encouraged into a walk to school program.

### **Approval of development between Witty, Church & Matfield Rds Moggill**

On 27 October 2008 council gave approval for 87 lots to be subdivided on this 20 hectare site subject to 192 pages of negotiated conditions. It will be a challenging development to execute with special provisions for preservation of the waterway corridor and an environmental protection zone to provide protection to native plants and animals. The EPZ must be registered as an environmental covenant with DNRW. The EPZ has some of the last remaining remnants of undisturbed understory vegetation in Moggill in a mixed *Corymbia* and *Eucalypt* forest.

### **Enlargement of the Pet Chalet at Upper Brookfield**

Council approved the enlargement of these facilities subject to conditions. Local residents raised concerns about noise and environmental impact. Apparently a

transitional environmental program has reduced dog barking noise and we recognise that the facility provides a valuable service to the local community.

### **Moggill Country Club**

A new development application was submitted to council late last year for 87 low density blocks and 41 units in 2 sets of low/medium density residential blocks. Most of the land was flooded in 1974 and the proposal includes using soil on higher parts of the site to build up the lower parts of the site. Apart from the flood concerns, the site is a long way from public transport and local services and would require car use. There is valuable vegetation and refuge for wildlife along the river and the river banks in this section of the river continue to be actively eroded. As with the original 2004 development proposal, we are concerned about this proposed development. Apparently council has requested substantial further information about the proposal. We await further news.

### **Vegetation clearing in Boscombe Rd Brookfield**

Extensive clearing and substantial earthworks on land covered with Eucalyptus forest in Boscombe Rd highlighted deficiencies in our planning laws. Our letters to the Lord Mayor and the Department of Premier and Minister for Planning and Infrastructure acknowledged the loopholes in the Council laws and the Integrated Planning Act 1997. As part of the current review of the IPA, two corrective actions have been identified to address the loopholes. These include removing the Show Cause Notice before issuing an Enforcement Notice and the introduction of Penalty Infringement Notices and on-the-spot fines for certain development offences. The site continues to erode and remains significantly damaged by the owner's unapproved development activity.

In concluding, I would like to thank all the members of the REPA Management Committee for their dedication to protecting the special rural qualities of our district and the local environment. We live in a unique area, a green belt adjacent to a major city. REPA has played a key role in ensuring that this special area is here for generations to come. I would also like to acknowledge the ongoing assistance and support we receive from our local councillor Margaret de Wit and our local state member Dr Bruce Flegg and their staff.